

## IS CLASSICAL MALAY A "MUSLIM LANGUAGE"? \*

1. I feel as my first task in this paper that of defining in the clearest possible way what I mean by "Muslim language"<sup>1</sup>. The classification of languages can be done according to any selected "measuring unit". If the measuring unit is genealogy and history, we have the most widespread system of classification, the genealogical one (Indoeuropean, Turkic, Semitic, Maleo-polynesian languages and so on). What is interesting for the classifier, in this case, is the *history* of morphemes: following this criterion Persian is related to Spanish, Arabic to old Accadian, Malay to the language of Easter Island, Osmanli Turkish to Yakutian, and so on. The superstrata, the cultural aspects of languages have no importance, or only a scarce importance, in this criterion of classification.

Apart from the genealogical criterion, any other criterion of classification can be used, if we aim at a *typological* classification. So, for instance, one could classify languages according to certain aspects of their structures. One of the oldest (and in my opinion still partly useful) system of typological/structural classification is the famous one that distinguishes isolating, agglutinative, flexional ad polysynthetic languages. Typological systems of classification could be invented almost *ad infinitum*, selecting various criteria<sup>2</sup>. Obviously some of them have no great scientific utility. One could imagine, for example, a system of classification based on the relative frequency of vowels and consonants: in this case Italian would be more nearly related to Malay than, say, to English or German.

A more difficult and delicate system is that based on cultural superstrata or ethno-linguistic substrata. It is the system in which one could speak of "Muslim languages". In this system however an important part is played by cultural, and not purely linguistic,

\* This paper was read at the "XXIX<sup>e</sup> Congrès International des Orientalistes", Paris, July 1973.

<sup>1</sup> An attempt to define different Muslim *literary* styles was already done by me in an article on the common aspects of Muslim literatures A. BAUSANI, *Per una letteratura comparata delle lingue islamiche*, in "Atti del III Congresso di Studi Arabi e Islamici", Napoli, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> On systems of linguistic classification see B. POTIER, in MARTINET, *La linguistique*, Paris, 1968, pp. 300 ff. On the superstratum/substratum problems U. WEINREICH, *Languages in contact*.

considerations, so that not all languages, perhaps, could be included in it. For reasons that it is out of place to discuss here I do not think that one could speak of "Christian languages" in a parallel way to "Muslim languages", due to the fact that Islam is something more than a "religion" in the sense commonly given to the World "religion" in the West<sup>3</sup>. In a similar way one can (and actually did) speak of "Balkan languages" in spite of the different genealogies of the languages of the Balkan area. Albanian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, for example, are genetically different (the first being an Illyrian, the second a Slavonic and the third a Romance language) but they have some traits in common, due perhaps, in this case, not so much to a superstratum, as in the case of "Muslim languages", but to a common "Balkan" *substratum*.

What I call here "Muslim languages" is an example of a typological classification based almost solely on the influence of socio-linguistic *superstrata*. This problem, I mean the problem of the basic, cultural, non ethnical "unity" of all Muslim languages, though not clearly expressed, is certainly present in the consciousness of Muslim peoples. I mention, notwithstanding its rather naive and non-scientific character, a sentence I have once read in a Brahui journal published in Pakistan<sup>4</sup>. Discussing the vulgate opinion —and genetically a quite right opinion— that Brahui is a Dravidian language (unmistakable features like the basic lexicon, the typically Dravidian negative verb forms, etc., all point to a Dravidian origin), the Author of that paper, who evidently looked not at the "deep structures" but at the cultural superstratum of the language, clearly Arabo-Persian, asked himself in a curiously horrified way: "How can one say that Brahui is a Dravidian language when Brahuīs in moments of danger exclaim: *yā Ḥasan yā Ḥusain!* or commonly use such expressions as *inshā'allāh, māshā'allāh* etc.?" Obviously, for him, "Dravidian" had a cultural, not a linguistic connotation, and in this sense he rightly discarded the applicability of that term to Brahui, a deeply *islamized* language. But this confusion between genealogical, structural, ethnical and cultural criteria led him to classify (wrongly) Brahui as related to *Arabic*, which is true only if we give, in this case, a special meaning to the words "related" and "relation". The difficulty of that Author could be solved only accepting the term "Muslim language", and defining in this case

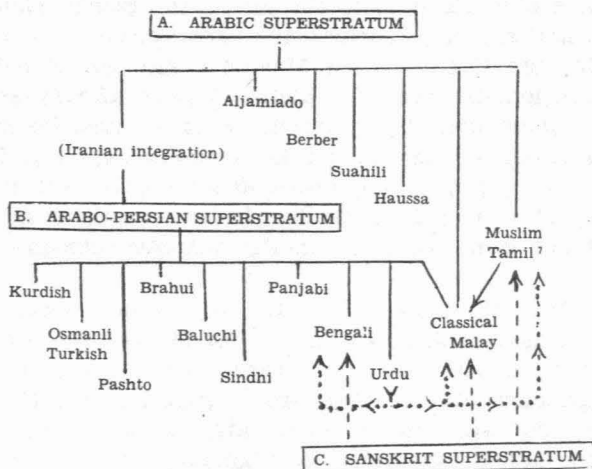
<sup>3</sup> This point is important to understand clearly what we mean by *Muslim* languages. It has been developed by many modern Muslim Authors: an interesting example is the essay by the Pakistani contemporary thinker G. A. PARVEZ, *Islam: a challenge to "religion"*, Lahore, 1969.

<sup>4</sup> *Ilum* (The Brother) published in Mastung (Beluchistan) since 1961.

"relation" as a "cultural/superstratum relation". Only from this point of view the "feeling" that —to shift to our special case— classical Malay has more to do with Arabic (or if you prefer Sanskrit) than with Samoan can be justified and scientifically accepted.

Provisionally we could, then, define "Muslim language" a language that, at a certain moment of its history, presents itself deeply influenced, lexically, graphically and to some extent also morphologically and even phonetically<sup>5</sup> by the great cultural languages of Islam: Arabic and Persian.

But here another problem presents itself. Why also Persian? My answer is: because Persian has been practically the first important language deeply influenced by the cultural/linguistic superstratum of Arabic, the first to accept the Arabic script, the first to produce great cultural Islamic masterpieces, so that it was not only Arabic, but Arabo-Persian that influenced all the "Muslim languages" of Asia<sup>6</sup>.



<sup>5</sup> It is not impossible to retrace morpho-syntactical influences of the Arabic or even Persian originals in the Malay translations of the Pasai/Acheh period (see my articles quoted in further notes). Also the phoneme /z/, extraneous to pure Malay, is an example of phonetic influence.

<sup>6</sup> I spoke elsewhere (in my article *Sopravvivenze pagane nell'Islam o "integrazione islamica"?* in SMSR, XXXVII, 2, 1966) of different "integrations" of primitive Islam with other cultures and their linguistic, literary and socio/religious effects. A part of the article is devoted to the *adat Minangkabau* and to the allegedly greater frequency of so-called "pagan survivals" in Indonesian Islam.

<sup>7</sup> By Muslim Tamil I mean the Tamil in Arabic script and with numerous Arabo-Persian loanwords used until some decades ago by Muslim Tamils of South India and Ceylon and now discarded. The various manuscripts and prints composed in this language deserve a linguistic and socio/religious study.

Instead of using too many words we could draw a sort of graphic scheme, including all, or at least the most interesting, Muslim languages in their relation to Arabic and Persian. Here it is: Of course this scheme is rather strongly simplified. Particular importance is given here to Malay. I would also add that by *Urdu* I mean here not only, and not so much, the classical Urdu of the 18th century or of modern Pakistan, but that "islamized" common neo-Aryan language of North India that spread also in Decan since the 14th century in the form called *Dakhnī* and whose influence on Malay has been, I think, a little underestimated by scholars<sup>8</sup>.

As it is clearly shown by this schematical drawing, there are two chief groups of "Muslim languages", the one in which the superstratum is exclusively or almost exclusively *Arabic* (generally they are the African Muslim Languages plus the "failed" Muslim language of al-Andalus, Spanish written in Arabic script and with many Arabic loanwords, the so-called, rather short-lived, *aljamiado*), and the one in which the superstratum is *Perso-Arabic*, including practically all the Muslim Languages of Asia, with a special position, however, for Malay. I have already said that this drawing *generalizes* too much. In certain cases, for instance, though the general superstratum is Perso-Arabic (e. g. in Kurdish) it cannot be denied that also a *direct* influence from Arabic is felt (loanwords in modern Kurdish taken *directly* from modern Arabic and not from the common Perso-Arabic lexicon of Asian Islam).

This scheme also shows, as I said before, how special is the situation of classical Malay; we have, for Malay, the clear direct influence of two superstrata, the A. (Arabic) and the C. (Sanskrit), a double influence of the Perso-Arabic superstratum (B.) either directly (in older times in North Sumatra perhaps) or indirectly, through Indo-Muslim languages (simbolically represented by Urdu), and also from Muslim Tamil.

2. In the case of Malay<sup>9</sup> we have to take into account, as a first important factor, the extremely strong *Sanskrit superstra-*

<sup>8</sup> As it is well known, Urdu itself presents not yet completely solved problems concerning its origins. I am sure, though I cannot here prove my assertion, that certain elements of the Perso-Arabic superstratum entered into Malay through what I term here *Urdu*, and should better be called "Indo-Aryan Muslim language", not precisely definable.

<sup>9</sup> For a general bibliography consult A. TEEUW, H. W. EMANUELS, *A critical Survey of Studies on Malay and Bahasa Indonesia*, 's-Gravenhage, 1961. Questions concerning our special subject have been partially treated by prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas in various works (e. g. *Preliminary statement on a general theory of the Islamization of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago*, Kuala Lumpur, 1969; *The origin of the Malay Sha'ir*, Kuala Lumpur, 1968; *Concluding*

*tum* and the interesting circumstance that this superstratum, chronologically preceding the Islamic one, has been on its turn felt as a sort of pre-Islamic *substratum*. In other words, while in the case of the linguistic Islamization of Persia the cultural Arabic superstratum partly substituted an ancient cultural-religious superstratum of the same genealogical origin as the common language, in the case of Malay the Sanskrit superstratum had had such a strong and deep influence that it could not be substituted by Arabic, which was only superadded to it<sup>10</sup>. The situation is partly similar to what happened to the Bengali used by Muslims. This language, already deeply Sanskritized, was only partly influenced by the Arabo-Persian superstratum and even retained (in spite of certain attempts at introducing the Arabic script) the ancient "pagan" script and the Sanskrit loanwords remained abundant also in the language of the Muslim Bengalis, who still resort partly to Sanskrit for the creation of neologisms. In the Malay Archipelago the language that is more similar to Bengali in this sense is Javanese. Even modern Bahasa Indonesia is influenced by this typically "Javanese/Bengali" trend. When for instance the Indonesian Embassy in Rome had to select a "classical" name for its residence, it chose the form *wisma Indonesia* and not *baitu'l-Indonesia* or *daru'l-Indonesia* or something similar (cfr. also *pancasila* of Sukarno). Even words of Muslim/religious significance like term for "fasting", *puasa* (from Skr. *upavāsa*) are Sanskrit in Malay. By the way, it is interesting to remark that out of the five names for the *arkān* of Islam (profession of Faith, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca and ritual alms) only three are Arabic, *puasa* is Sanskrit and *sembahyang* purely Indonesian. (In Persian too the terms for "prayer" and "fasting" are Iranian and not Arabic; *namāz* and *rūzē*, the remaining three being Arabic as in Malay). The Sanskrit element in Muslim *religious* lexique deserves perhaps to be studied more in detail. It seems to me that, in general, the Sanskrit terms are used to indicate "generally religious" objects: so for instance in the preceding cases "prayer" and "fasting" are phenomena present in all religions. The same applies to the term for "religion" in general, that in Malay, at first sight rather strangely, is a Sanskrit, not an Arabic word, *ugama/agama/igama* (from Skr.

---

*postscript to the origin of Malay shā'ir*, Kuala Lumpur, 1971). A different opinion is that of S. Q. Fatimi, *Islam comes to Malaysia*, Singapore, 1963. Important hint at the question also in *The Cultural Problems of Malaysia in the Context of South-east Asia*, edit. by S. T. Alisjahbana, X. S. Thani Nanyagam, W. Gungwu, Kuala Lumpur s. d. (after 1965).

<sup>10</sup> The basic book on the subject is still J. Gonda, *Sanskrit in Indonesia*, Chota Nagpur, 1957.

*agama*, originally meaning a religio-philosophical school especially applied to Shivaism). *Din* exists too, but is —if I am not mistaken— a technical term for Islam itself. *Ugama* is, in a way, a secular term for “religion” in general, so that we can speak of *ugama Hindu*, *ugama Keristian* etc. but not of *din Hindu*, the same as we can speak of the “gods of ancient religions” (*dewata2 ugama2 yang lama*) but not of *Allahs* of old religions!

3. A second important point, connected with the general problem of the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago —in my opinion not yet clearly and finally solved—<sup>11</sup> is the individuation of the *Muslim* linguistic superstratum. Looking again at our drawing, does this superstratum correspond to that marked with the letter A (Arabic) or B (Arabo-Persian)? Though I am a specialist of Persian and therefore perhaps naturally inclined to emphasize the Persian element in Malay<sup>12</sup>, until recently rather underestimated, I must admit, agreeing with prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas, that the linguistic Muslim superstratum that influenced classical Malay is certainly *not* comparable to the linguistic Muslim superstratum that contributed to the creation of such Asian Muslim languages as —say— Osmanli Turkish or Urdu. The Arabic elements that flowed into classical Malay came —there is no doubt— from Arabic directly and not from the Arabic lexique included in Persian, as it is the case for Urdu and Osmanli. Even Malay classical orthography bears witness to this: in Malay the phoneme /p/ is expressed by *ڤ* and not by *پ* as in all Asian

Muslim languages (influenced by the B. superstratum)<sup>13</sup>. If so, then, two problems are facing us: a) who brought this rich Arabic lexique into Malay? b) how are the comparatively numerous Persian elements in classical Malay to be explained?

In this case Malay shows us —as I hinted at it before— a situation different from that of almost all remaining Muslim languages of Asia, a situation that renders it more similar to certain Muslim African languages like Suahili. The Malay Archipelago —similary to East Africa— was not *conquered* by Muslim armies that settled there after the conquest, (the case of Iran or Northern India for example) but was religiously colonized by people

<sup>11</sup> See the essays mentioned in note 9.

<sup>12</sup> My article *Note sui vocaboli persiani in malese/indonesiano*, in AIUON, N. S., XIV, 1964, needs revision and corrections. Many more could be added, for instance, after a careful study of Malay works translated from Persian. Important reseaches are being done in this field by my learned friend prof. Brakel from Monash University in Melbourne.

<sup>13</sup> This fact has been also emphasized by prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas in his works mentioned above.



(I do not enter here into the discussion whether they were merchants, Sufis or both, nor am I interested in their *ethnic* background) who used Arabic and not Persian as their basic religious and cultural language. The fact that the Malay classical language is much more *Arabicized* than *Persianized* is not due to the to their comparatively *small numbers*. The Malay Archipelago was *ethnic* quality of those who brought about the Islamization, but not *invaded by* a great number of *speakers* of a Muslim language (in that case it would have been *Persian* or better *Indo-Persian*) but Malays were taught by a comparatively small number of Muslim teachers, who used, for this teaching work, Arabic as a *written* language, even if they happened to be Persians or Indians (Raniri, a Gujarati, used Arabic!) The fact that they might have been Arabs, or Indians (Gujaratis, Bengalis, Muslim Tamils etc.) is, in this case, linguistically and islamically, *irrelevant*.

For what concerns Persian words in Malay I tried to show in an article, that I have already mentioned, that they are not, generally speaking, connected with religion or philosophy (as it is the case for instance in Urdu or Osmanli) but rather with refined court culture and legendary tales, and that they were probably brought to Malaysia by Persian *speakers*<sup>14</sup>, and were part of the literary and cultural background of those of the Islamizers of the Archipelago who came from India (or perhaps in some rarer cases even from Persia, as is shown by certain names of persons mentioned by ibn Baṭṭūṭah)<sup>15</sup> in older times. The fact that the Persian elements were introduced in older times and the knowledge of Persian was soon forgotten is clearly shown by the extremely corrupt form in which the few Persian distichs or sentences in manuscripts (even comparatively old manuscripts) of works of Hamsah Fansuri, Raniri and others, are preserved<sup>16</sup>.

4. A *third* point concerns the *literary* importance of the Muslim linguistic superstratum. Those Muslim languages which, like Osmanli Turkish and Urdu, were islamized by a great number of *settled speakers* of Persian, all created literatures deeply influenced, in their forms, by Persian poetry. The presence of *ghazals*

<sup>14</sup> In a more restricted field I tried to show the influence of a Persian speaking person to explain certain orthographical mistakes in old Malay mss. translated from Persian. See my article: *Note su una antologia inedita di versi mistici persiani con versione interlineare malese*, in AIUON, N. S. XVIII (28) 1968 esp. p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> For instance a man with the *nisba* "Shīrāzī" or "Iṣfahānī". See my article on Persian loanwords in Malay mentioned in note 12.

<sup>16</sup> More strange is the fact that even modern Malaysian editors of such texts, like Khalid Husain in his edition of *Taj-us-Salatīn*, did not even try to reconstruct the Persian original; this shows an almost complete disinterest in Persian culture in modern Malaysian and Indonesian Muslim cultural circles.

and *rubā'is* in their literatures is an unmistakable symptom of this type of cultural islamization: I elsewhere proposed to call them "*ghazal*-style literatures"<sup>17</sup>. Also seen from this angle Malay shows a completely different aspect. It is true that we can find even in Malay some attempts at *ghazal* and *rubā'ī*, especially in the *Tajū's-Salatin* but —apart from being very far from beautiful and, at least for my taste, an utter failure— they were never frequent and very soon were abandoned. Again a further evidence that Malay —even from this literary point of view— is more similar to African Muslim Languages than to the Asian "*ghazal*-style" Muslim languages.

5. A fourth point: what do we mean by "classical" in "classical Malay"? It seems to me that scholars of Malay might be distinguished in two groups. Some consider the traditional *hikayat* as the symbol of Malay classicity (e. g. prof. Winstedt), others (e. g. prof. Syed Naguib el-Attas) prefer to see in the Muslim writers of the Pasai/Acheh period (especially Hamzah Fansuri) the model of Malay classicity<sup>18</sup>, individuating moreover in the *shair* (an "invention" of Hamzah) the typical, classical Malay poetry<sup>19</sup>. For the first group *pantun* in poetry and *hikayat* in prose are the classics; for the second group *shair* in poetry and "Muslim" prose (of the type of the treatises of Hamzah, Raniri etc, or the *Bustan as-Salatin* and *Taj as-Salatin*) are the "classics".

Obviously, if we have to consider Malay as a Muslim language the second group are right. In an article on the structure of the classical Malay *hikayat*<sup>20</sup> I tried to demonstrate how deeply —I dare say "metaphysically"— *Indian* is the structure of the classical Malay *hikayat*. And, at the same time, I completely agree with what certain modern Malaysians (al-Attas, Khalid Husain etc.) and rare (especially old) European scholars (e. g. Werndly) wrote about the prose style of Muslim Malay works, a style that

<sup>17</sup> In my article, mentioned in note 1.

<sup>18</sup> See especially the remarkable study by Syed Naguib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, Kuala Lumpur, 1970. For the cultural milieu of the Acheh school see the rich essay by D. LOMBARD, *Le sultanat d'Atjéh au temps d'Iskandar Muda (1607-1636)*, Paris, 1967. The soviet Malasiologist N. F. Alieva (*O formirovanii indonezijskogo literaturnogo jazyka*, in "Sovremennye literaturnye jazyki stran Azii", Moskva, 1965, p. 157 ff.) puts the two centers of Malay "classicity" (Pasai/Acheh and Malacca/Johore/Riau) on the same level, whereas prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas, in my opinion, is right in discovering in certain productions of the Malacca/Johore/Riau centre a "tendance archaïque et mourante" (I quote from the French translation of his inaugural lecture published in "Archipel", 4, 1972, p. 143).

<sup>19</sup> See A. TEEUW, *The Malay Sha'ir*, in "Bijdr. tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde", 122, 1966 and Syed Naguib al-Attas's works mentioned in note 9.

<sup>20</sup> A. BAUSANI, *Note sulla struttura della hikayat malese classica*, in AIUON, N. S. XII, 1962.



prof. Winstedt frankly describes as "atrocious". As I am not myself a Malay to judge of beauty of style I prefer to give the word to Dr. Khalid Husain, that, in the preface to his edition of *Taj-us-Salatin*<sup>21</sup>, says:

"Winstedt dalam "A History of Malay Literature", aneh-nya mengatakan bahawa Taj-us-Salatin di-karang dalam bahasa yang kurang baik dan nilai sastera-nya juga kurang. Sa-balek-nya Werndly, mengatakan dalam karangan-nya yang dimuat dalam "Maleische Spraak-kunst", bahawa Taj-us-Salatin "mengandongi beberapa ajaran yang bermoral dalam bentuk cerita dan di-karang dalam bahasa yang bagus dan gaya yang baik. Taj-us-Salatin ada-lah salah satu kitab yang terbaik dalam Bahasa Melayu untuk di baca". Kita tidak dapat menyangkal bahawa jasa2 Winstedt dalam bahasa, sastera dan kebudayaan Melayu cukup besar untuk memberi penerangan kepada kita. Akan tetapi, sayang sekali Winstedt sa-bagai sa-orang sarjana Inggeris yang beragama Keristian mempunyai pendapat yang agak bertentangan dengan ajaran2 Islam yang terdapat dalam Taj-us-Salatin seperti "theology", "mystic", "jurisprudence" dan sa-bagai-nya. Sa-balek-nya kitab Taj-us-Salatin di-pakai sa-bagitu luas sa-kali di-gugusan pulau2 Melayu malahan oleh penguas2 bangsa Belanda waktu mereka menjajah Indonesia selama 350 tahun. ...".

I quoted this sentence in full in the original Malay also to show how similar is this modern-Malay prose, stylistically, to the "translation style" Muslim Malay, rather than to the prose of the *hikayats*...

6. But on the other hand it is impossible to deny that the mere facts: a) that a consistent group of Malays and Indonesians seem to feel the *hikayat* style as their "classical style" and b) that during all its history Malay society widely accepted the *hikayat* and *pantun* style as its own "classical style", prove that the linguistic islamization of Malay did not have sufficient time to affirm and consolidate itself so as to create a solidly and indisputably Muslim language. I repeat: it is not question of an alleged superficiality of the Malays in accepting Islam, as it has been often stated by Western scholars of the colonialistic period (and now, too...) but it is above all a question of time. In the case of North India the lapse of time between the first islamization (10th century, with Maḥmūd of Ghazna) and the arrival of colonial European influence (18th century) amounts at least to 8 centuries, but in the case of the Malay Archipelago only about three/

<sup>21</sup> *Taj-us-Salatin*, di-usahakan oleh Khalid Hussain, Kuala Lumpur, 1966, p. XIII.

four centuries separate the first Islamization of North Sumatra (beginnings of 14th century) from the arrival of Europeans, and even less, if we consider that the Portuguese first arrived there in the 16th century!

As prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas rightly says <sup>22</sup>:

"In the Nusantara the coming as well the imposition of Western culture and imperialism beginning in the 16th century certainly interrupted and slowed down the process of Islamization ... In certain parts of the Nusantara, Western influence has resurrected the preislamic feudal order; in modern times we witness the revivification of feudal tendencies, old customs devoid of coherent cultural values, old titles, court traditions etc. Western scholarship engaged in Nusantara history has neglected and minimized the importance of the study of Islam here"...

7. Summing up, the following points seem to me sufficiently clear:

a) Classical Malay, considered as a Muslim language, shows certain features that distinguish it from the rest of the great Asian Muslim Languages. The features are especially due to the presence of a strong Sanskrit superstratum and to the *predominantly Arabic* composition of the Muslim superstratum.

b) The presence of the old Sanskrit superstratum plus the shortness of the lapse of time between the beginning of Islamization and the advent of colonialism prevented the formation of a completely *Muslim* language, so that—in a way, and without any depreciatory connotation—classical Malay could be defined as a "failed" Muslim language, or a "quasi-Muslim" language, if you prefer.

c) It would be possible to distinguish three types of Muslim languages: 1) Those of Africa 2) The Muslim Languages of Asia 3) Malay (and Muslim Tamil), these last characterized by the prevalence of the Arabic superstratum plus a first strong Sanskrit superstratum.

This situation is mirrored in the presence, in modern Malaysian (and even more in modern Indonesian) culture, of two trends, one international/Muslim, the other local/nationalistic: a typical example of the differences between these trends is represented by the recent polemics aroused by the inaugural lecture of prof. Syed Naguib al-Attas in the auditorium of the National University of

<sup>22</sup> *Islamic Culture in Malaysia*, in "The Cultural Problems of Malaysia"... op. cit. in note 9, p. 129.

Kuala Lumpur on January 24 th, 1972<sup>23</sup>. I do not intend to enter into these polemics. As it often happens both parties have their good reasons. But what I feel important to emphasize here is an idea I have more than once expressed in my articles, i. e. that if Modern Malay prose has achieved a high degree of fluidity, simplicity and adaptability to modern thought and culture, this is *not* a heritage of the *first*, non-Muslim type of "classcity" (the *hikayat* classcity) but it is a result of the second classcity, that of the Muslim treatises, the allegedly "atrocious" Malay of *Taju's-Salatin*, the translation of Raniri, etc. Only as a "Muslim language" Malay was opened to the possibility of modernization. It is difficult to imagine a leading article of a modern newspaper written in the style of the *Hikayat Awang Sulong Merah Muda*, not so difficult to imagine it written in the style of Hamzah Fansuri or Raniri. These, and not the fairies and magic princes so admired by European scholars of Malay are the real originators of modern Malay prose.

At the close of this paper allow me to paraphrase the last sentences of my article on a Malay manuscript on Arabic grammar<sup>24</sup>. "As all international languages—I wrote in that article—also Malay must pay for its diffusion on ample and divers ethnical substrata with the loss of certain local *kampong Malay* sapid idioms and forms: if English has to become the international language certainly that international English will not be Chaucer's English or King's English, but probably an English similar to that used by certain M.A.s of Indian Universities (or by myself!). But it will be from this non-idiomatic international Raniri/Tajus Salatin Malay—a Malay that deserves the title of Muslim Language—that in the course of time new aesthetical forms more adapted to the new conditions of a universalistic world will be born. Neither from the beautiful *pantun* nor from the delicious *hikayat* will new literary forms spring, but from the evolution of *shair* and Muslim prose.

Roma

A. BAUSANI

<sup>23</sup> Published in French translation in "Archipel", 4, 1972, pp 132-149 and *Debut d'une polemique?* *ibid.* pp. 149-150.

<sup>24</sup> A. BAUSANI, *Un manoscritto persiano-malese di grammatica araba del XVI secolo*, in AIOUN, N. S., XIX, 29, 1 (1969) pp. 70-98.